

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1-2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 326 further including said telephone and a housing, wherein said housing contains said telephone and said alphanumeric keyboard disposed in a common housing with the local telephone device.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, wherein the alphanumeric character code signals represent American Standard for Communications Information Interchange (ASCII) character codes.

8. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, including a display.

9. (Original) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 8, wherein the display is operative to display digits corresponding to the telephone number dialing signals as they are generated on the telephone line.

10. (Original) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 8, wherein the display is operative to display alphanumeric characters corresponding to alphanumeric character code signals generated on the telephone line.

11. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, including a display, memory, and processing logic.

12. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 11, further operable in a third operating mode, the keyboard being operative in the third operating mode to (i) accept a message entered by a user via the keys of the keyboard and (ii) store the entered message in the memory, and wherein the keyboard is further operative in the first operating mode to generate on the telephone line a sequence of alphanumeric character code signals representing the stored message.

13. (Currently Amended) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 12, wherein the keyboard is operative to automatically enter the third operating mode when the local telephone device is in an on-hook condition.

14. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 11, being further operative in the first operating mode to (i) answer an incoming call on the telephone line, (ii) identify the caller who has placed the incoming call, and (iii) generate on the telephone line a sequence of alphanumeric character code signals representing a message previously stored in the memory, if the caller is identified as an intended recipient of the message.

15. (Original) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 14, being further operative to maintain a record of the incoming call and to provide the record to a user upon request.

16. (Original) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 11, including an interface to a printer.

17. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 11, being further operative to accept and store a user-entered telephone number in the memory, and being operative in the second operating mode to generate on the telephone line, upon a command from the user, a sequence of telephone number dialing signals corresponding to the stored telephone number.

18. (Original) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 11, being further operative to (i)receive a message from the telephone line, (ii)store the received message in the memory, and (iii)display the stored message to a user upon request.

19. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, wherein the telephone number dialing signals are dual-tone multi-frequency signals.

20. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, wherein the telephone number dialing signals are pulse signals.

21. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, wherein (i) the telephone number dialing signals are

associated with respective decimal digits, (ii) certain ones of the telephone number dialing signals are further associated with respective sets of letter characters, and (iii) each telephone number dialing signal is generated in response to the pressing of the key for the associated decimal digit and in response to the pressing of the key for each letter character in the associated set of letter characters.

22. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, wherein (i) certain ones of the telephone number dialing signals are associated with respective decimal digits, (ii) certain other ones of the telephone number dialing signals are associated with respective letter characters, and (iii) each telephone number dialing signal is generated in response to the pressing of the key for the associated decimal digit or letter character.

23. (Original) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 22, wherein the telephone number dialing signals are associated with a multi-frequency tone set.

24. (Original) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 23, wherein the telephone number dialing signals are associated with a dual tone multi-frequency tone set.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) An alphanumeric keyboard comprising:
control circuitry ~~being~~ connectable to a telephone line; and
~~including~~ a plurality of keys electrically coupled with said
control circuitry, each key being uniquely associated with an alphanumeric character from a set of alphanumeric characters including at least a plurality of letter characters, each alphanumeric character being representable as data by an alphanumeric code signal from a set of alphanumeric code signals, each alphanumeric character also being representable as a component of a telephone number by a telephone number dialing signal from a set of telephone number dialing signals in accordance with a mapping, the ~~keyboard~~ control circuitry being operative in response to the pressing of a key for a given alphanumeric character (1) in a first operating mode, to generate the alphanumeric code signal to which the given alphanumeric character is mapped, and (2) in a second operating mode, to

generate the telephone number dialing signal to which the given alphanumeric character is mapped-;

said control circuitry being operative detect the presence or absence of an off hook condition and a call connection involving a telephone device coupled to said telephone line and to automatically enter the second operating mode when said telephone device connected to said telephone line is in an off-hook condition and no connection on the telephone line has been established, and the control circuitry is operative to automatically enter the first operating mode when the local telephone device is in an off-hook condition and a connection on the telephone line has been established.

27. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, wherein the set of alphanumeric characters comprises substantially all the letters of the English alphabet.

28. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 27, wherein the set of alphanumeric characters additionally comprises substantially all the decimal digits.

29. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 28, wherein the keys are arranged in substantially the conventional QWERTY format.

30. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26, wherein the mapping is a standard mapping.

31. (Previously Presented) An alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 30, wherein the standard mapping comprises the conventional mapping of the letters A, B and C to the telephone number dialing signal #2, the letters D, E and F to the telephone number dialing signal #3, the letters G, H and I to the telephone number dialing signal #4, the letters J, K and L to the telephone number dialing signal #5, the letters M, N and O to the telephone number dialing signal #6, the letters P, R and S to the telephone number dialing signal #7, the letters T, U and V to the telephone number dialing signal #8, the letters W, X and Y to the telephone number dialing signal #9, and the letters Q and Z to the telephone number dialing signal #0.

32. (New) The alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 26
wherein each telephone number dialing signal generated in response

to the activation of each of said first and second pluralities of
keys comprises a unique dialing signal.

33. (New) The alphanumeric keyboard according to claim 32
wherein each dialing signal comprises a tone having multiple
frequencies.